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ADDRESS

RED & BLACK

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DONATIONS WELCOME

FRANCE, MAY 68

Commemoration of a rebellion is also commemoration of its failure. Realisation that to our liberatory dreams reality had dealt a death blow. Also it is an opportunity to search for individual and collective inadequacies that thwarted the course of the revolution itself; to understand the Psyche of the actors and critically evaluate the mistakes committed so that lessons can be drawn for future reference. Objectively these undertakings rarely take place. Instead we burden reality with ideological constructs more of the order of socialistic appartchiks' kind and authoritarian praxis. What is referred to as a revolution is more a history of the reaction.

First of all it is a misrepresentation to present the 68 movement as a revolutionary event even if there were some revolutionary sparks within the movement. It was rather a student-worker reaction to wavering post war capitalism reaching its saturation point and failing to deliver the goods. But the dynamic of capitalism is not so much to deliver goods but to maximize profit. To do that it needed to forfeit the welfare sector, break the back of small competing capitalist enterprises and to introduce new technologies in order to extract more surplus values from the workers. The technologies that capitalism began to put into practice then are bearing excellent results now: increasing productivity, downsizing of enterprises, downsizing of renumeration, downsizing of workers' benefits and downsizing the human aspects of the individual while increasing the pace of work, increasing sweating. Its catch word "competition" is glorification of the Almighty dollar.

Universities, as conveyer belts of bourgeois consciousness, had to be restructured too in order to be more docile citadels of capitalist legitimacy. They were already producing surplus cadres undermining their own positon by creating pools of unemployed and thus providing a cheap labour force. The students were meant to be competitive in the market, obedient and complying to the law of capital. Learning itself appeared to be redundant since job opportunities were diminishing and with them the

opportunities to change life for the better.The students started voicing criticism about universities. They then began to question the social fabric of society: education, socio-political-economic ideologies; social, political and personal relations.Criticism turned into protest and the latter into rebellion. The rebellion and deepening of the conflicts enhanced the awakening of consciousness accompanied by changing perceptions of seeing, doing and thinking. The rebellion against the established values turned into a desire to reappropriate freedom, initiative, individual as well as collective abilites, to articulate private as well as social existence, to practice cooperation, solidarity, to manage institutions and self manage life and the social being.

French students succeeded particularly in capturing succinctly the genuine spirit of rebellion for the reason that they began consciously to search for ways to organize and act outside of old organizations knowing the difficulties they were faced with: people born in chains, nourished in slavery, in most cases, will prefer bondage to freedom, especially if they try to run their everyday life and affairs without masters and supervisors. To break these chains students tried to evoke constantly the spirit of independence by involving students, workers and the unemployed to debate all spectra of social, political and personal life.

Every thing was to be scrutinised and questioned: Institutions, teaching, exams, terminologies, classes, social relations, sexuality, while life was to be lived, enjoyed and not wasted on the factory floor or in the dungeons of capitalist enterprises. Neutrality of knowledge as well as the role of students themselves in the division of labour had to be questioned. The students had no illusions that to put a genuine socialist alternative is not to build an utopian island disregarding social contexts. Autonomy of universities if it is to be a tangible fact and not an ideology, implies autonomy of factories, social autonomy and individual autonomy. Autonomy is a myth if divisions between workers and bosses, leaders and led, students and professors, are not abolished. Therefore they rightly challanged universities as being a class tool, creating a class distinction, if not a chasm, between knowing-not and knowing-how. What is the value of an erudite shut in the cloister of the capitalist tower of intellect, a tool

of class oppression and haranguer of bourgeois values, separate from the untouchables, vomiting tracts on the virtue of capitalism?

The 68 rebellion was full of libertarian potentialities, but under the simmering of revolutionary activities there was a stong current of entrenched authoritarian potentialities, strong enough to defuse if not kill the revolutionary zest. Nonetheless for a lot of students the movement was aimed at not changing "a Prime Minister but to ensure that bosses have no power in factories and in the society". They insisted in appropriating "the means of production" and ensuring that "power decision is in the hands of the workers". The stumbling block to prevent such revolutionary possibilities was, as usual, the consciousness rooted in bourgeois mentality. To break it they adopted libertarian slogans: "Plurality", "Circulation of Ideas", "No monopoly of knowledge and information", "No hierarchies", "No division between intellectual and manual labour", "Religion is the last mystification", "Humanity will only be happy when the last capitalist has been strangled with the guts of the last bureaucrat", "Creativity, spontaneity, life", "Be realistic -demand the impossible".

Despite this floodgate of slogans, slogans do not alter consciousness. And despite inception of revolutionary practices such as the occupation and running of the University and attempts to do the same in some factories, the revolutionary spark remained contained within the precinct of Scylla and Charybdis: De Gaullist right and Stalinist left. Slogans such as "All power to the imagination" was a forceful push to break the mental chains of slavish customs. But in an atmosphere saturated with Stalinism, the CGT was under its control, it had pale resonance among the workers. In addition, constant bureaucratic invectives against the rebels: "elements recruited in a milieu foreign to the working class"deviationists who try to lead the workers astray and "provoke division in their ranks in order to weaken them", of elements who " are in the service of the bourgeoisie", of "pseudo-revolutionaries" who tend to undermine "the rise of united left forces" etc., the workers refused to cross the Rubicon and defy the forces of oppression. Irony of ironies, the "the true revolutionaries" the union bureaucrats of CGT, CFDT and FO struck a deal with De Gaulle to ensure bourgeois continuum of

law and order and keep the workers in a subaltern position once again.

The 68 was not a revolution. It was a festival of rebellion. Nonetheless the myth of capitalism with human features caring for the community was exposed but it did not prevent the former going from strength to strength due to a false dialectical assumption that communism is the negation of capitalism. A bogus theory still fashionable today. Certainly, genuine communism is, but not communism Soviet style, which itself is another facet of capitalism. But this false dialectic has given capitalism an excuse to crush any upheaval for socio-political justice or any attempt at other alternatives. It also set the stage for an aggressive campaign to conquer by force, persuasion and seduction the hearts and the imagination of the oppressed.

The same logic was used by socialist-capitalism to crush the Spring of Prague, for fear that communism with a human face may resurrect like the mythical Phoenix, even if Bolshevism in its metamorphosis into pseudo- communism defaced, long ago, the human face of the latter. It began with Lenin who, intoxicated with power, enchained the Promethian spirit of communism; with Trotsky who militarized society and introduced labour conscription; and Stalin who stakhanovized both, perfecting the virtue of barrack culture, euphemistically referred to as "socialist realism".

Faced with the crushing weight of conventions, entrenched interests and the servile psychology of the majority, ambivalence within the ranks of the rebels, and despite explosions all over the world of sporadic rebellions, the movement did not eventuate in an alternative reality. Thus the roads were left clear for the triumphant march of the transnationals, culminating in the body politics of MAI., gulag without frontiers. These events were helped by the fact that the "society of spectacle" had already made significant inroads into the consciousness of the oppressed.

Revolutionary potentialities were there, the stage for a revolution set, but the majority of the actors having bifurcated consciousness refused to cross the Rubicon and give the

movement the needed revolutionary impetus to help unfold the creative forces of the revolution. Instead, an unfolding had begun, an omen of concerted efforts to eliminate what had been left of the student and proletarian indomitable consciousness and to incorporate the rebel against the system into the system. It was not a difficult task because many rebels had been searching not for an alternative society without masters, gods, and without hierarchies, but for a society of alternative governments, alternative hierarchies, alternative powers, if not oppression.

Nonetheless, even if the Social Revolution was lacking, 68 gave an impetus to feminism, put in motion a critical re-appraisal of patriarchy, hierarchies, the roles of men and women as players of their own oppression and the oppression of others. It introduced an anarchist approach to every day existence, organizing and acting without leaders. Spontaneity? Yes! And in this spontaneity, youth without politcal orientation tasted the sweetness of freedom and used it as an operative social force without masters, tutors and ideological mentors. The results were tremendous. "Each hour of demonstration had been equal to a year of discussion", "Each day of brawls had made more than ten years of militancy"(Jacques Bayna).

Thirty years afterwards social democrats, and the pluralistic left, entrenched in bourgeois values and incorporated into the power systems of oppression, try to claim a continuity between 68 as a revolution and the role of socialism as a power broker of the neo-liberal order.

In 68 it was the coins of Pompidou, the blessing of De Gaule and Unions' manipulations that subdue the proletatriat. Today, it is Global Capitalism, helped by the Leftist governments, that try to erase the revolutionary memory of the workers and inflict its consciousness to the point that it tries to "confiscate our future", by appropriating our revolutionary past.

Jack

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AT LAST
YOUTH IS AWAKENING

AT LAST YOUTH
IS SHOWING US THE WAY

YOUNG MAN
THE FUTURE BELONGS TO YOU

BUT DON'T YOU TOUCH
THE PRESENT.... AND LEAVE
THE PAST ALONE!

WOLINSKI

FRANCE 1998

WE KNOW WHAT YOU NEED TO DO BETTER THAN YOU DO, BECAUSE WE ARE SPECIALISTS !

Ever since you elected us, we have thought of nothing but your happiness.

We are extremely concerned about the tragedy of unemployment. That's why we have explored every possible solution to it. We want to spare you the torments of idleness (which as everyone knows is the devil's workshop); to save you from the anxiety that people experience when they are allowed to decide what they're going to do with their own lives.

After lengthy and costly calculations, our experts have discovered the solution capable of revitalizing the cycle of profits (which will, of course, be shared with everyone, as usual), namely the creation of a maximum number of jobs indispensable for human fulfillment, such as shoe shiner, door opener, supermarket bagger, of walker of the boss' dog. We are confident that millions of unemployed people will be happy for this opportunity to play a useful role in society.

Certain disgruntled characters, always quick to criticize but never offering any constructive ideas on how to create a financially viable future for humanity, denounce this program (the only program capable of saving our civilization), contending that such jobs are useless and obnoxious. These criminal utopians want to put people above profits and thus deliver our country over to barbarism, as in the dark days of the French Revolution or the bloody outrages of the Paris Commune.

Well, we have learned the lessons of history. We have no intention of allowing our country -this wonderful country that assures well-being, freedom of expression, leisure activities and televised sports for all its citizens - to be handed over to drunken, uneducated proletarians. This is why, in our all-seeing wisdom

and in order to ensure full employment and security for everyone, we have decided to offer jobs to hundreds of thousands of young people as auxiliary police, part-time watchmen, substitute ticket inspectors and apprentice informers.

Please continue to rely on us to think and act for you. Above all, do not go to the Jussieu assembly - that will accomplish nothing and will only hurt your own cause. And as you know, your cause is our cause.

Your Government

(Reprinted from: BUREAU OF PUBLIC SECRET, April 1998)

HURRAY FOR ANARCHY! **George Engel on scaffold, Chicago 1887**

WHOEVER PRESCRIBES A RULE OF ACTION FOR ANOTHER TO OBEY IS A TYRNT, USURPER AND ENEMY OF LIBERTY
THERE IS ONLY ONE LAW FOR THE POOR, TO WIT: OBEY THE RICH.
EVERY GREAT ROBBERY THAT WAS EVER PERPETRATED UPON A PEOPLE HAS BEEN BY VIRTUE OF AND IN THE NAME OF LAW.

Albert Parsons

I DESPISE YOU. I DESPISE YOUR ORDER, YOUR LAWS, YOUR FORCE-PROPPED AUTHORITY. HANG ME FOR IT!

Louie Lingg

I HAVE NOT BEEN FOUND GUILTY OF MURDER. HOWEVER, IF I AM TO DIE ON ACCOUNT OF BEING AN ANARCHIST, ON ACCOUNT OF MY LOVE FOR LIBERTY, FRATERNITY AND EQUALITY, I WILL NOT REMONSTRATE.

Adolph Fischer

RSB/FD V/4733

19th March, 1928.

The Collector of Customs,
MELBOURNE.

In compliance with your memorandum C.& E.28/6167 of the 3rd instant, forwarding copies of newspapers "Veglia" and "La Diana", I have to advise that these publications have been examined. I forward herewith for your consideration, notes on contents of same, together with translation of an article from Page 3. of "La Diana", and from Page 184 of the Anarchist Review "Veglia". These papers are typical anarchist publications of little interest to educated persons, but probably inflammatory in their effect on more ignorant minds.

It is difficult to express an opinion from the particular issues examined, as to whether the newspapers can be considered deleterious, but it may be considered that as purely anarchist publications they come within the scope of the Proclamation of 1921.

It may be mentioned that the addressee of these newspapers is mentioned in the columns of "La Diana" as a contributor to the funds of the newspaper. This man is regarded in this office as holdin extremist views.

RSB

Inspector.

HAYMARKET

Dear Friend of Anarchy,

We bring you bad news about the successful temporary desecration of the Haymarket Monument and continued efforts by a fairly small group of liberal assholes to transform the Haymarket Anarchists into Jesse Jackson type trade unionists. The Department of the Interior through a decision by Bruce Babbit has proclaimed the Haymarket Monument a **National Historical Landmark.** The National Park Service has placed a plaque five feet from the Martyrs' Monument.

Needless to say, we are very upset about these events and as you read the information enclosed more of the history of the Illinois Labor History Society's drive to whitewash the history of the Haymarket Affair will become clear. We find the story of one hundred and twelve years ago very appealing because there was a real Anarchist movement back then. Thousands called themselves anarchists in 1886. We only hope that in the not too distant future once again many people will join our cause.

This history gives us great joy because we can regularly visit The Square even though there is no indication that the event took place there, except for the occasional spray-painting. Because May Day came from Chicago, it also has significance around the world. The events of 1886-7 have great historical importance because a strong anarchist movement was damaged greatly. Radicalism in general was hurt in particular anti-capitalist unionism. The eight hour day movement was set back for many years. The real victors of that period were the pro-capitalist reformers, ILHS types, and the US system which rid itself of those troublemaking **As** by severe repression. Had most of the speakers at the cemetery May 3 lived in 1886, they would have called for the anarchists' heads.

From Some Chicago Anarchists

The Second Haymarket Tragedy

After many years of effort a bunch of revisionist historians,

assorted liberals and labor hacks have succeeded in getting the United States government, through the Parks Service, to designate the Haymarket Martyrs' Monument at Forest Home (Waldheim) Cemetery, outside Chicago, a National Historical Landmark. The Park Service plaque placed in front of the Monument is an insult, not only to the Haymarket Anarchists buried there, but to every anarchist who ever lived, as well. It's hard to believe, but the government and their opportunist stooges have sunk to new depths in order to completely distort the ideas of these eight brave men.

Rehabilitating the Haymarket Anarchists

Parsons, Spies, Lingg, Fischer, Engel, Fielden, Schwab and Neebe, in 1886, were among the most anti-American people alive. It is without dispute that they all advocated revolutionary anarchism.

The last words of Fischer and Engel on the gallows was **Hurrah for Anarchy!**. The prosecution repeatedly declared that Anarchy was on trial, "save our institutions, our society". Yet, a handful of hypocrites and liars, through the offices of the Illinois Labor History Society, a professorship at the University of Illinois in Chicago, help from a few local liberal politicians, and the U.S. Park Service (Dept. of Interior), have attempted to forever silence the truth about the eight and their cause.

In an article in the *Chicago Tribune* published on May 1, 1998 a shill staff writer, Ron Grossman, parroting the ILHS line, spends 29 paragraghs distorting the history of the Haymarket Affair. He writes of the martyrs, Emma Goldman, Voltairine de Cleyre and Harry Kelly, all anarchists, without once mentioning their anarchist politics. Not once does he use the "A" word in any of its forms. This is more white-washing of the history of the Haymarket Affair, that began years ago with the appearance of Professor William Adelman's "Haymarket Revisited" in 1972. Since then Adelman has conducted an unholy crusade to sanitize the eight anarchists. When he does admit that the men were anarchists, he denies that they advocated Social Revolution. No, in 1886 anarchism was merely a brand of Jeffersonian social democracy.

His shill, Grossman, in the *Trib* article claims that the martyrs would have been happy with Roosevelt's New Deal. Grossman also uses the term "Old Left", a term most of us hadn't heard in more that twenty years, referring to left democrats, CP types, etc.; in short, pinkos, but not reds. This is the crowd that these fakers want to associate the Haymarket Anarchists with.

Adelman, in his worthless book, writes of the numerous CP hacks, like Wi Z. Foster, buried in close proximity to Emma Goldman's grave (an unfortunate line of graves we call "murderers row"). But in his books and the tours he takes to the cemetary, Adelman fails to mention the support that those buried in "murderers row" gave to Stalinist atrocities while lauding their involvement in the pro-capitalist AFL-CIO. On one such tour, back around 1984, Adelman had the nerve to tell a group of college students that Emma Goldman was no longer an anarchist when she died. This was too much for one of our comrades who blew up, cursing Adelman repeatedly for his lies. This was our first run in with the ILHS's revisionist agenda.

One hundred and twelve years ago the powers that be deployed the strategy of depicting anarchists as mindless, anti-social, terrorist foreigners. Today, the liberals have re-invented the Haymarket Anarchists as innocent, misunderstood Eight-Hour Day Trade Unionists. They want us to believe that the incident of 1886 was just a misunderstanding, a product of hysteria. It wasn't the real America, according to the ILHS and the Park Service who represent the real American mainstream. What a crock of shit!

The purpose of these hypocrites is to continue and reinforce the mainstream American view that all discussions about the organization of society must be restricted to the leftism (sic) of the ILHS and the Jesse Jacksons, to the rightism of the Pat Buchanans. Anybody outside this limited spectrum is dismissed as a lunatic not worth listening to. They truly hope to somehow salvage a dying liberal-social democratic politics by connecting their views and agenda to those of the Haymarket Anarchists, who have much respect from people who are not happy with this society. This is their plan: opportunism, cooptation and instrumentalism, using the eight to promote a very sick Old Left.

Haymarket Revisited - 1986

We had already had several disputes with this bunch back in 1986, during the centennial anniversary of the Haymarket Affair. Many anarchists from around the world will remember stories of the differences and some comrades participated in the disruption at the cemetery on Sunday, May 4 that year. With considerable help from people from around the world the liberal's ceremony was challenged so strongly that several European anarchists described the protest as "powerful".

During the run-up to the liberals' sham "Haymarket Centennial", three of us were attacked by 7 or 8 goons while leafleting one of their functions. In the fist-fight that ensued one of us got a bloody lip and one of them, reportedly, a broken nose. One member of our group was repeatedly threatened, to the point that he could not attend a number of events for fear of being shot.

In 1986, the liberals boasted of a park and monument near Haymarket Square, a city sponsored parade down Michigan Avenue, a city holiday on May 1, etc.. None of this ever happened.

The Plot Sickens

This same ILHS, while claiming to be the caretakers of the Haymarket Martyrs' Monument, has failed to replace the plaque, containing the names of three Haymarket Anarchists who were not executed by the State, which was stolen by scavengers over two years ago. This plaque would cost about $200. Instead of replacing this plaque, ILHS spent over $1000 to fix the sidewalk around the Monument. Note their priorities. We will be challenging the ILHS to replace it soon, or we will do it ourselves. We have not done so until now because we expected ILHS to fulfill their responsibilities.

Because of all this hot air from twelve years ago and the failure of ILHS to replace the plaque on the Monument, we did not believe it when a wobbly friend informed us that he had read that the U.S. Park Service had declared the Haymarket Martyrs' Monument a national landmark. We thought it was just more hot

air from the liberal assholes. Then a few day before May Day we heard that the ILHS and the Park Service were going to be sponsoring a dedication of a Park Service plaque to commemorate "workers' rights"(ie, wage slavery) in the U.S. on May 3 out at Forest Home.

We still couldn't believe it,but calls to the ILHS and the Illinois Historical Preservation Agency in Springfield on April 29, confirmed that Department of Interior Secretary Bruce Babbit had actually approved the designation of the Haymarket Martyrs' Monument as a National Historical Landmark.

We Decide to Crash the Party

We determined that this obscenity could not go unchallenged. With three days to get ready, we called as many local anarchists as we could and urged them come out to the cemetery on May 3 to spoil the liberals' party. About 15 or so comrades from our group, the Autonomous Zone, and unaffiliated anarchists, who were just as shocked, amazed and outraged as we were, showed up to protest.

We were surprised to see about 500 or so people, mostly middle-aged old lefties and liberals, a poor sound system, tents, a brass band, a choir, and every AFL-CIO hack in Chicago there. We had our banner (a drawing of Uncle Sam with bood-dripping fangs and the legend: "Bite the Hand that Bleeds You: Smash the State"), black flags and three leaflets, which four of our group passed out while wearing skeleton constumes labeled with the names of the Haymarket Martyrs.

Immediately when the program began we started to heckle the speakers: the priest, Monsignor Egan, who invoked the name of god; the Park Service bureaucrat; the representative of the Labor Department. Our disruption brought out the goons and the cops who tried to intimidate us into silence. We demanded a chance to speak from the podium, but the price was our silence in the face of the lies being told about the martyrs. Then negotiations ceased when one of our comrades was shoved by a self-appointed guardian of the Park Service plaque. There were a number of other minor scuffles and threats throughout the

afternoon. We finished up our intervention with a few appropriate chants and a soapbox address by comrade Fred M.

The minions of the ILHS and labor hacks accuse us of being disrespectful of the Haymarket Anarchists by our rude behavior. But who was really being disrespectful? Not one speaker, to our knowledge, mentioned that the men buried there were anarchists. Even Paul Avrich, a historian who has made his living off of the history of the anarchist movement, failed to mention this fact in his remarks. This is outrageous, and we hope that our anarchist comrades will think twice about inviting this charlatan to speak at anarchist gatherings in the future.

But, despite the threats and intimidation we experienced, we did receive some warm support from some of those attending the ceremony on May 3. One of Ben Reitmann's daughters, Olive, came by our banner and said that she was happy to see us there. Others voiced similar sentiments and were equally appalled at this attempt to bury the ideas of the Haymarket Anarchists along with their bones.

We hope that you, too, will be outraged by this atrocity. The Haymarket Tragedy of 1886-87 took the lives of five courageous anarchist comrades and smashed a thriving anarchist movement in the city of Chicago. They could kill the anarchists and disrupt the movement, but they could not kill the Idea. The second Haymarket Tragedy of 1998 is an attempt to finish what the State couldn't 112 years ago. The Haymarket Martyrs were Anarchists, not liberals! Those opportunists and revisionists who are trying to shove that fact down the memory hole must not succeed!

Some French Views on Unemployment

You don't need an employment agency to find an
OCCUPATION!
Join us at the general assembly at Jussieu University

***

Our "roves" are days of active encounter, days in which we play

with the city and with life. We try not to let any fixed routine develop, but to find inspiration by encouraging the expression of everyone's imagination. Some people consider our enthusiasm excessive. We don't claim to be superior to others, but we do feel that our "get-togethers" contain a little seed of magic. Little by little new relations develop; we rediscover moments of freedom; the coming together of our dreams, and even of our frenzies, leads us to a reality that seems more vibrant than before. It's been a long winter. Let spring flower!

***

The best way to abolish unemployment is to abolish the work and the money that are linked with it.

***

It's absurd to demand the "creation of jobs." Enough riches already exist to take care of everyone's basic needs; they only need to be shared around. As for all the production that serves no real purpose, a social revolution will close more factories and eliminate more stupid jobs in twelve hours than capitalism does in twelve years. We will no longer have any reason to produce such things as food colorings, aircraft carriers or insurance contracts. We don't want "full employmnent," we want full lives!

***

It is both morally and strategically justified to make particular demands, such as for higher unemployment benefits or free public services. But a social movement must not limit itself to such demands. To do so amounts to asking for justice from the very forces that are *based on injustice.* The famous slogan: **Be Realistic Demand The Impossible !** is not a mere lyrical or provocative exaggeration, it is actually the most sound, sensible advice...Whether we are workers, students or unemployed, what we all realy need is the space and time to meet, to share dreams, to recreate our lives. We should demand full *enjoyment,* not full employment !

***

Up till now the specter of unemployment has been used by the capitalist system to terrorize people into accepting any job they can get, even the most absurd, under any condtions.... Isn't it time we ask ourselves the point of all this production? What are we producing? For whom? How.? At what social and ecological cost?...Let's stop leaving things to the lying specialists who claim to speak in our name. It's up to us to decide what is possible,

what we want, and how to get it. It's up to us to reclaim power over our own lives. It's up to us to take back the material resources that the political, financial and media powers have stole from us.

***

The unemployed are free to *do nothing,* since they are cut off from the means of production...They become dangerous when they seek to do something significant with that freedom...The real choice is not between wage labour and unemployment, but between free activity and alienated activity...

Our movement could potentially serve as a platform for the articulation of all the partial, separate struggles that succeed in recognizing their commonality in the struggle against the whole commodity system..

The basic contradiction within our movement is between the tendency limiting itself to demands for reforms, represented by the (official) unemployed associations, and the tendency calling for a radical overthrow of the system, which is being so freely expresssed in the general assemblies at Jussieu. Insofar as they are reformist and bureaucratic organizations, the unemployed associatons have particular, separate interests; the bureaucrats who control them can hardly seek a real end to unemployment because this would amount to putting themselves out of their *own* jobs. They have no other aim than to continue leading an absurd struggle that will never win and never end. The last thing they want is for the movement to spread and escape their control...

One of the most urgent problems faced by our movement is how to get out of the ghetto of special-interest demands centered around the issue of unemployment; how to trigger a chain reaction among other sectors of the population and bring a halt to the tyrannical rhythm of production. The May 1968 revolt produced such an effect...But the bureaucratic leftist organizations, which were so powerful at that time, predictably succeeded in sabotaging it...But May 1968 also demonstrated the astonishing effectiveness of small groups of a few dozen people immediately implementing their own decisions. These groups liberated speech as well as action - because it is only when

people have something to do together that they have something to say to each other.

***

The vast majority of the unemployed remain prisoners of their isolation. This struggle is now at the crossroads: either it will exhaust itself demanding impossible reforms of the welfare system that perpetuates the condition of the unemployed; or it will become aware of its essential basis and begin calling in question the commodity relations that have devastated everything human that there ever was in our society.

***

Certain sociologists have described us as "a sacrificed generation." Well, we refuse to sacrifice our lives for their stock market, their government, their rigid politics. We are carrying on a daily struggle, autonomously organized. We don't have any leaders. Our general assembly retains all power; its committees are subject to the collective...

Fellow students, unless there is basic social and ecomomic change we will be the future unemployed. We call on everyone to support the right of the jobless and the precariously employed to decent lives. You are the ones who will determine the future. Don't let others decide it for you! Fight back!

Highschoolers Action Committee

(Reprinted from: Bureau of Public Secrets, April 1998)

WORK FOR THE DOLE: A DISGUISED CONFLICT OVER SOCIAL RE-ORGANISATION

"Work for the dole" proposals seem quintessentially Liberal. They are not. The Hawke government floated similar proposals in 1986.

There is a considerable difference between the relevance of a work for the dole push before, and a similar push after, the initiation and implementation of what might be considered more sophisticated kinds of labour market programs. The Hawke

government work for the dole proposal was one of a number of varied and heterogeneous ideas on unemployment entertained by the government, some of which - such as support for rural communes - were not without interest, and, even, radicalism. The subsequent social security review to some extent extended, and to some extent limited, the choices available by formalising the policy debate and the policy options. Under Hawke and Keating, an initial work for the dole proposal sparked off a wider policy debate. Under Howard, the policy alternatives to work for the dole have been tried, declared failures and found too expensive. Work for the dole is introduced as the only quick fix left untried.

I say "quick fix" deliberately because it is the Howard government's evaluation of its own proposal. For both Howard and Vanstone - who differ remarkably in their views for members of the same government - the only permanent remedy for unemployment is micro-economic reform. This "reform" is supposed to have been kicked off by the Workplace Relations Act. But both Howard and Vanstone warn this will take time, both to put into legislation and to implement. Their electoral mandate, indeed, is economic reform, but at the slowest possible pace. This means that any other policy is there to keep the punters happy until full-scale economic structural adjustment has had time to do its work. Work for the dole is exactly what it appears to be: crude and degenerate populist rhetoric which can have no conceivable practical impact on unemployment figures, designed to appeal to the resentment of the employed who envy the unemployed their leisure, until the day when universal wage cuts initiate the laisser-faire full employment economic earthly Paradise. One expects fundamentalist cargo cults such as this to flourish at the end of a millennium. Work for the dole cannot succeed, in any terms, and the government has no serious expectation that it will.

Work for the dole is, nevertheless, popular, if not with anyone who knows anything about unemployment, at least wtih the former A.L.P. voters who turned to the Liberals in 1996. This is because work for the dole is the logical outcome of important trends in social security and employment policies, not those most publicised, but those most subterranean. The trend I am most concerned with is the continuous extension of the criminalisation of

the unemployed. The Social Security Act is nothing but an endless succession of proscribed acts, and vicious penalities, the more vicious in that they deprive of incomes, temporarily or permanently, people who have no life support except the income they can be deprived of. The conversion of social security from an obligation by government to provide compensation for the absence of employment to the payment of below-subsistence handouts to suspected frauds is legitimised by the mathematical pseudo-calculations by economic rationalists which "prove" that if unemployment figures are high it can only be because people prefer the dole to employment. Rather than admit their calculations are wrong, they prefer to brand the poorest people in Australia as criminals or semi-criminals. The Department of Social Security tries to encourage a dob-in culture among low-income employed people by which they become unpaid DSS informants on their unemployed friends and neighbors. With a philosophy, that "if welfare offences were not prosecuted, the credibility of the welfare system itself, and public support for the substantial public expenditure which goes with it would be called in question" (Barlow [for DSS] to Lowe 17/11/92) the more offences inserted into the Social Security Act, and the more prosecutions for the endless new "crimes", the more "credible" DSS will be.

It is only a short step from this kind of criminalisation to compulsory hard labor for all unemployed - work for the dole, based on the practice of eighteenth and nineteenth century poorhouse. What is new since the eighteenth and nineteenth century is not vey much - only the kind of class war which organised dob-ins institute between the employed and the unemployed. The DSS tries to inculcate Hansonite attitudes to the unemployed (Pauline advocated compulsory national service for 18 to 20 year olds in her maiden speech) among employed people. The election figures for Oxley show DSS's success in this objective.

Not only a class war is going on between employed and unemployed but an age war between old and young. Moral panics against the behaviour of the young are traditional in Western societies. Side by side with the creation of a youth

wage, as employment opportunities for those under 21 have diminished, the creation of a youth dole has proceeded. Both the Hawke and the Howard work for the dole schemes have initially targeted this age group, the group with the lowest dole payments, and the least chances of finding full-time work. The rites of passage of the young into adult late capitalist society are becoming increasingly brutal.

This is the seamy side of government policy on unemployment. Wasn't there once, though, a positive element, the training programs, help with job search, personal advice from case managers, support during early periods of employment, moves in general toward equality of opportunity in employment? or does work for the dole embody the same principles as labour market programs, without the expensive bits? Can one draw a line between the explicitly punitive polices of DSS and apparently user-friendly "educational" policies of DEETYA when it is the DSS rules, which make DEETYA education compulsory? In the House of Representatives debate on work for the dole, Labour' s Martin Ferguson described his party's Working Nation Programs as a form of work for the dole. I believe he is right. It is because he is right that it is no longer possible, as it was in the eighties, to counterpose training programs to work for the dole, as, the Senate Community Affairs Committee Minority report on the work for the dole legislation suggests.

Let us not, however, make Martin Ferguson bear the brunt of this critique. He is, unfortunately for the unemployment policy of the A.L.P., far too easy a target. Let us take John Freeland's response to Hawke's 1986 work for the dole proposals, the article "Re-asserting The Right To Work" in Australian Social Welfare Impact, July, 1986. Unlike the Keating government, and like the present Beasley opposition, Freeland counterposes to work for the dole, a non-compulsory educational alternative, specifically for young people. Unlike any of the governments since 1986, Freeland recognises the age segmentation of the labour market and the collapse of a substantial section of the youth labour market. He admits that "jobs aren't there" for 15 to 17 year olds. That, now, means 15 to 21 year olds. His proposals start with the issues arising from mass youth unemployment -as all work for the dole proposals explicitly do,

and as Working Nation implicitly did. And he explicitly endorses work for the dole with conditions. "The community welfare sector", he writes, "has to insist on five minimum conditions before into about the mooted program. [Work for the dole]" (emp ases mine -O.G).

It is to Freeland's recognition of a dwindling number of jobs for those under 21 and his concern for policies to meet this "problem" that I want to respond. The question I want to ask, and it is the same question I would ask proponents of work for the dole schemes, is: Why is it a problem that some alternative is needed to non-existent jobs? It is to Freeland's credit that he addresses this question. One cannot say, however, that his answers are satisfactory. He writes:

> *A dole culture does develop and it feeds on multiple rejection by employers and frequently, rejection by family and friends. The victim develops an overwhelming sense of isolation and worthlessness.*

This is our old friend, the "culture of poverty" thesis, straight out of Oscar Lewis. We know the support such theories gave Nixon's and Reagan's social security programs. This "culture", in its Australian as well as in its American counterpart, is a curious animal. On the one hand this culture supposedly develops "isolation and worthlessness", even "self destruction". But it can also develop the opposite of these characteristics:

> *Others develop an aggressive defence against the rejecting society by countering the rejection by employers with a rejection of work and all it stands for. The negative image imposed by society is rejected and replaced by a positive self-image of aggressive dole bludging.*

Given the psychological alternatives, of isolation and worthlessness, leading to self-destruction - what Freeland could, but does not call, an extreme guilt psychosis, the unemployed's internalisation of society's disregard of them - is not radical self-assertion, and the development of a positive self-image preferable? And isn't it rational? If there is no work available for an entire age segment of the population - as he admits - shouldn't

work be criticised? Freeland nonetheless labels such a critique "a positive self-image of aggressive dole bludging". The dirty, pejorative language of populist demagogy, which Freeland presumably rejects from Howard and certainly rejects from Hawke, becomes Freeland's own language when he tries to describe sensible unemployed people attempting to make an intelligent critique of impossible social demands on them.

Freeland moves from the examination of dole "cultures" to the conclusion, "to leave people inactive on the dole for long periods is to condemn them". Earlier, the argument wilfully perverted the subject/object dialectic - society's rejection of the unemployed became, with the wave of a hand, the unemployed's rejection of society. It was not, heaven forbid, society, which destroys the unemployed; the unemployed's culture led them straight to self-destruction. Suddenly, the reader, exhausted from the effort to disentangle Freeland's grammar, finds her or himself accused: you, reader, might be condemning the unemployed, if you leave them inactive, guided only by "dole culture". Freeland shifts from the dogmatic to the imperative mode of discourse (always an easy step): "the only viable long term structural solution lies in..." It is this step, however easy, which provides Freeland with his crucial mystification: the mystification of social change itself.

You, the reader, must step in from outside the text, and the social melodrama it so lopsidedly portrays, as an agent of change and act on the ethical (or policy) schema Freeland has laid down for your guidance. It helps if you are a community worker (why else would you be reading Freeland?). The more emphatic the denial of the efficacy of any possible revolt of the unemployed against society, the more Freeland has to disguise the way in which he wants society changed, and the people he sees as agents of that change. To be too honest might even more radically estrange the people he maligns as "aggressive dole bludgers", who would resent the idea of self-appointed professional elite claiming to monopolise social change.

What "society" means to Freeland is "the employer"; "rejection by society" simply means rejection by employers. You, as community worker, must act on the employers' behalf.

It is no surprise, therefore, that , for the "problem" that Freeland has tried and failed to define, his "solution" is a cheaper imitation of the life cycle of the young bourgeois, whose education, at university, extends to at least 21, before he goes to "work", if we can give this name to bourgeois self-activity. Freeland tries to give them a cut-price version of the home comforts of the bourgeoisie - freedom of choice and a number of options, excluding, naturally, the bourgeois university. It does not occur to him that the lower classes can only be dragged, kicking and screaming into lifestyle of the young bourgeois. Compulsion is inevitable, as the Keating and Howard governments recognised. Such education as is provided is predominantly "vocational'", a substitute for work, in a form approved by the bourgeoisie, but not paid for as work, unless it involves conventional employment usually part-time, casual, precarious and low-waged. In the absence of waged work, the definition of work is extended, without this extension being admitted and argued for, so that the unemployed is forced into learning activity dictated, but not remunerated adequately, by the bourgeoisie.

The government launch of its new Common Youth Allowance takes Freeland's proposals to their logical conclusion. If "re-asserting the right to work" can be translated, in Freeland-ese, into "re-asserting the right to be trained", we end up with Vanstone and Howard's new ultimatum to the young: no training, no dole. For the moment, this policy applies only to those under 18. If people in this age group want to spend time looking for a job rather than staying at school - complying with what used to be the basic objective of every social security work test -they will be cut off the dole. For work, as activity control, is being substituted by training, as thought control.

Freeland's claim that, without vocational training, the unemployed must "self-destruct" has now become, courtesy of Vanstone and Newman, a self-fulfilling prophecy. Just in case Freeland might be wrong, the refusal of training will deny a person under 18 the means to live. "Post-compulsory" as an adjective applied to education has been re-defined as "compulsory". The Services Delivery Agency is the new truant officer.

The three years of Working Nation have proved that most of its

programs at best reshuffle the dole queues, and at worst replace employed with unemployed people in existing jobs. To ensure unemployed people do something acceptable to the bourgeoisie, rather than responding to a denial of work with a rejection of work, it is simpler to develop a punitive program which consists solely of work in its least creative form. This will be an adequate foretaste of most jobs now available in the lower tier of the dual economy, as much in its payment rates as any other respect. To ask of such programs that they lead to other forms of employment or develop skill is to increase expense and lay a basis for public criticism - or so the government thinks. Keep it simple, keep it cheap and keep the work ethic paramount. Many people who did every Working Nation Program on offer and never got near the job the Job Compact was supposed to guarantee will accept Howard's new scheme as something different -until, as it must, it leads to the same result.

Although the government legislation allows Howard's pilot projects to be expanded to every age group, and could get private employers into the picture, the scheme is being sold on Howard's account of the pilot projects. These projects, in trying to reassert the work ethic, more profoundly undermine it. For if the only "work" available for those under 21, especially in rural areas, is not waged work, but government funded community projects, we have an offer in the work for the dole schemes something qualitatively different from what employers offer, when they offer anything. Howards's public sector has not lost any squalor since Galbraith coined his celebrated phrase, If anything, the squalor is now organised. But even so, work for the dole is, now, a Paradise of supremely non-creative work, with little meaning for those who do it. Painting rocks in East Gippsland, is a frequently cited example. The community sector acts as the accomplice of the state in viewing idle unemployed people as threats to social order, and putting them to work, no matter how unfulfilling. This is public sector job creation. This is community control. Howard picks up the catch cries of the left and shows what they mean at this time and this place - useless hard labour for those the economy makes jobless. At the end of work for the dole the unemployed will not merely have lost faith in a right-wing Government. They will have lost faith also in what passes for the left.

Where economic neo-liberalism reduces wages for precarious and meaningless work to below-dole levels, and calls the result "full employment", it has, without understanding what it is doing, created jobs that no intelligent person thinks worth doing. This kind of overthrow of the wages system from within complements Howard's overthrow of public se tor job creation from within. The two shifts toward the self-destruction - to borrow a phrase from Freeland - of capitalism as we know it are intended to go together. They constitute a radical de-legitimation of the social system for those with the lowest incomes; they impose, indeed, a re-proletarianisation on nineteenth-century lines of the employment/unemployment double where differences between the two are no longer discernible.

Bleak, even radically bleak scenarios for the future cannot substitute for alternative strategies. Yet there is an alternative strategy, one created by Howard himself, what one might call the Mal Colston welfare model. I mention Mal Colston, not, like the media, to demonise him, but because he represents an iceberg tip of a parliamentary and corporate welfare system, which cannot be reduced to the excesses of one particular individual welfare consumer. Richard Titmuss told us, in 1955, that there was a social division of welfare, in which the senior figures of both public and private sectors gained the lion's share, while the people in the official welfare queues got the scraps.(1)This argument has been put in Australian terms by Martin Rein.(2) This discussion of corporate/bureaucratic/parliamentary welfare initiated a debate on welfare as a class system, but a debate within the social welfare policy area in which the possibilities of class struggle within welfare seem never to have been raised. But such possibilities must be canvassed if the present attacks on the poor, of which work for the dole is only the most dramatic, are to be beaten back. There has never been a work or activity test for the upper reaches of welfare, which compares with the draconian provisions of the Social Secuirity Act. Ruling class welfare is substantially self-regulated; and it is very generous indeed to its beneficiaries. It permits those beneficiaries to enjoy, not only a high income, but, on completion of their work - I asked before whether this was an appropriate name for bourgeois activity - a leisure as relatively unencumbered as they like to make it. It is this leisure,

and what is done, or not done with it, rather than simply the level of money benefits, that is the most appropriate target for critique.

It is important to understand that total welfare funding is far more than the steadily decreasing federal government appropriation for social security and employment services. The total welfare budget, in private and public sectors, can only be determined by a determined campaign to open corporate and official books. That total budget must be taken under social control and its class priorities reversed.

But it is secure leisure which is the precondition of all creative intellectual work, and it is into the epoch where intellectual replaces manual labour that the so-called information revolution is now taking us. That "revolution" not only creates leisure by liberating people from employment, but by demanding leisure as a precondition for participation in new kinds of work. But leisure is not an ahistorical given. The reclaiming of creative leisure from the bourgeoisie - and was it, is it, in their hands ever creative in the sense of fully self-developing the powers of the bourgeoisie? - involves the revolutionisation of the leisure that now exists. It was , after all, a revolution, our most recent, that raised this issue, when the situationists wrote 'Never Work' on the walls of Paris in the May, 1968 revolution. It is towards this revolutionary re-organisation of society that Howard's two opposed welfare strategies - work for the dole and parliamentary Colstonism - now conduct us inexorably.

Post Script

The article you have just read was originally presented as a paper at the 1997 National Conference on Unemployment. It was subsequently submitted for publication in the published version of the Conference Proceedings, which includes only papers selected by assessors, and was rejected, allegedly because the argument was too "personalized".

The discussion of John Freeland's 1986 article on work for the dole seems to be the argument which attracts this criticism. In Freeland's article, as the quotations I cited indicate, an attempt is made to marginalise any critique of work by the long-term

unemployed (which must include the critique in my article) by describing such people, in populist invective far removed from the customary language of academia (or ACOSS, or the Evatt Foundation), as "aggressive dole bludgers". Unemployed people take accusations of "bludging", and, indeed "aggressive bludging" personally, as their accusers intend personal affront. I have not tried to throw personal insults at Freeland, in the manner in which he attacks myself and my class, but if my attempts to restrain my language have been unsuccessful, my vocabulary in no way resembles that that Freeland has scavenged from the sociological gutter. The conflict over language and personalisation should not be allowed to mask the real issue: a gulf between the underclass and the petty bourgeois welfare establishment which is so wide it cannot be discussed in common forum.

Freeland's article not only documents his inveterate class prejudice. It shows that, from the very first government initiatives on work for the dole, the welfare establishment's attitude to work for the dole has been ambivalent. Labour shadow employment minister Martin Ferguson's 1997 declaration that Keating's Working Nation labour market programs were alternative versions of Howards work for the dole is a re-working of Freeland's 1986 article, itself a blueprint for Keating's schemes. The prevailing view in 'welfare circles', as stated in the November 1997 Australian Councill of Social Services information and policy paper Jobs Pack is that government-funded imitations of capitalist jobs should be combined with govenment-funded imitations of capitalist education (so-called "training"). This is demonstrably the same view as that stated by Freeland in 1986. The decline of the labour market at the age extremes in an unregulated capitalist labour market is not seen as evidence of a crisis of the labour market, and therefore of work as understood in the capitalist mode of production, and alternative modes of production canvassed. Instead, government money is sought to hide the collapse of the wages system, by expenditure on vocational training. The results of this policy, as practised in the years of the Labour Government, are not on record. An increased supply of educated "trained" graduates are availble to employers without the need for higher wage payments corresponding to improved education and training. The jobs crisis for people between 18 and 25 is being exploited by the new

highest rates of unemployment (see Peter Dwyer, 'Finn, Pathways, Employment and Disaffiliated Youth' in Spierings et al. [eds.] Jobs for Young Australians: Proceedings of an International Conference (Adelaide, 1995)

In spite of the Liberal Government's recognition of the failure of Labour's schemes, it has now committed $383 million to work for the dole schemes before a single work for the dole project has been trialled on the basis of the government's own criteria. This has required an amendment to the Social Security Act to delete the sole restriction on the conscriptive character of Keating's labour market schemes - the exclusion of "measures compelling the person to work in return for a newstart allowance"(section 606 (I) (eb). (One should note that there was no way the Labour government could have been prosecuted for a violation of this section) A long history of unchecked change in the direction of conscription to the work test provisions of the Social Security Act has now culminated in the legalisation of peacetime labour conscription. This is happening on one of the few occasions in which the labour market is acting as Friedman and Hayck expect, and producing a modicum of new jobs, even full-time ones. For a Liberal government, work-for-the-dole on the present scale shows a complete lack of faith in the market, and, its own Treasurer's performance. However inconsistent as overall economic policy, it remains thoroughly consistent with the policies of what used to be called social security.

People like Howard, and his mentors Clinton and Blair, understand the collapse of domestic and international labour markets as well as most anarchists. They know, too, that most of their policies are accelerating that collapse. For the growing numbers who now find themselves, excluded from the capitalist economy, "full employment ", as far as it ever existed, can only be re-established, not by a return to Keynes but to the conscriptive measures of the war economies of 1914 -18 and 1939 - 45 as American 'workforce' or Australian "work for the dole". Strictly, "conscription" and "war economy" are obsolete metaphors. War, since the 1990 Gulf adventure, has been substantially downsized, and human killers have been replaced by killing machines - an inevitable development, once nuclear weapons were invented. Conscription is no longer a military

expression, except in the class war, in relation to Marx's "reserve army of the unemployed". It is the war against the unemployed which defines the post 1985 war economy which has, ruthlessly ditched the few and limited freedoms the labour market gave to unemployed people looking for work. They can no longer use their own judgement in choosing jobs, unless, they have savings on which to live.

These measures self-evidently add substantially to the powers of the state. The "agreements" which ratify work for the dole are documents one must sign or lose the dole, and which impose no obligations on the state. They come close to being indentures, work for the dole strongly resembles the indentured labour of Pacific Islanders in the early years of this century, in the public, rather than the private sector. The state which administers these indentures is not the state as it used to be, but a post-welfare state. Continuing to possess all the accumulated powers of the old Social Security Department over the lives and livelihoods of the unemployed, Centrelink is a contractual body, which carries out the terms of contracts agreed to with the CEOS of half-government departments, half semi-privatised corporations, the radically downsized DSS, DEETYA and DHFS. Contracts here do bind the government, and the "contract" which was once created by law, now determines that law. The vast discretionary power given Centrelink by its power to make "agreements" of extraordinary scope with the unemployed allowed the Government to introduce the privatisation of Employment Assistance Australia while withdrawing unacceptable amended legislation from parliament. The powers of the New Job Network is being defined by contracts between the vestigial ex-welfare state departments and Centrelink. Parliament is losing its law-making power, without even a mouse riot in question time. This will not worry anarchists. What should worry anarchist is what will replace bourgeois democracy once the political suicide of the "representatives of the people" is completed. Will government departments become private corporations, and united with the rest of the private sector in some form of corporate oligarchy? Or can we have popular decision-making without any governmental structures -anarchy, in short? The time to think about what anarchy means today, starting from the crisis of employment and welfare and moving on, may be a shorter time than we thought we had.

and moving on, may be a shorter time than we thought we had.

Owen Gager

1. Titmuss,"The Social Division of Welfare" in Essays on 'The Welfare State' (London,1958)

2. "Private provision of welfare: From welfare state to welfare society" in Henderson (ed) The Welfare Stakes: Strategies for Australian Social Policy (Melbourne, 1981)

BOOK REVIEWS

SOCIAL PLURALISM: A REALISTIC ANALYSIS.

By A.J. Baker. 1997 (P.O. Box 269, Rozelle. N.S.W. 2039)

The book is a philosophical outline of Social Pluralism aimed mainly at academia. Nonetheless, it provides interesting reading to those who are interested in social issues, especially those who advance libertarian socio-political theories. It exposes the traps of mass movements, the function of ideologies and illusions. it is heavily indebted to Pareto, Michels, Mosca, Marx and Freud to prove that the unconscious, ideology, the iron law of oligarchy, illusions, not to mention myths, are forces to reckoned with if we are to understand social processes. While it is a valuable contribution to libertarian thought, its heavily defeatist pessimistic tonality is a crushing indictment of liberation, even if, the author himself is on the side of freedom. In the labyrinth of his determinism there appears not to be an exit: "Give up all hopes you who enter here" And, precisely at this point I air my disagreements, if disagreemants they are.

The fact that all rebellions have until now failed to a lesser or greater extent to bring about human liberation tends to perpetuate the illusion that, despite so many human sacrifices and so much blood, there is no exit from authoritarian precincts, This pessimistic outlook, willingly or unwillingly, leads to the conventional wisdom of no resistance: jump into the conventional currents and be intellectually and emotionally asphyxiated. At least this is the destiny of "disconnected ontological atoms"

puppets of determinism. And puppets they are because without them authority will have difficulty asserting itself.

The thinking atom, if you like, the individual, who attacks hierarchy, oligarchy, and exposes bureaucratisation of organisations is not a "disconnected" unit. Curiously enough, it is representative democracy and its companion the New Liberal Order that are creating social atomism by promoting the Global village and by promoting the virtue of an individuality incarcerated in its own private ward whose significance and freedom lies in the act of election. Thus they legitimise the ragged, capitalistic, exploitative person as a paradigm case of the individualist.

Baker is correct when he points out that the illusion cultivated, especially at election times, that if "each of the citizens casts his or her vote on the basis of aware political judgement, in order to elect competent, morally responsible representatives who faithfully carry out their wishes in the public interest" is indeed a view that is "vital...for the simple atomist position . But, as he also points out :

> Separate persons aren't really isolated or unitary phenomena; we have to take account of trans-individual complexities, various forms of psycho-social activity which occur in individual persons and which, in association with like forms of activity in other individuals, constitute forces and factors that have a positive, highly influential place in social affairs. But also, contrary to monistic views such as Marxism, we don't have one social whole or system or complex of which these forces and factors are mere ingredients. There is no such thing as *the* purpose, function, business, or way of working, of society. What we have is a variety of ways of working, a variety of sub-wholes or sub-complexes and other interdependent phenomena made up of forms of activity that pass through individuals." (pp 30-31)

Nonetheless, this "variety of sub-wholes or sub-complexes" do have purposes, functions etc. Government and business have a function, to compel, to invade the waterfront and crush the unions. There are "ways of working" of society - authoritarian ways.Surely illusions, deceptions, ideologies play a very important role but

nevetheless **there are ways.**

Many writers who reject "conspiracy theory"(p42), to keep up their appearance, are, nevertheless, engaged in the mystification of reality reducing "conspiracy theory" to an atomistic concept in order to soften its impact on people, as for example, by declaring as an aberration the security guard fascist display on the waterfront. The underhand dealings of big brotherhood corporations such as MAI are not exceptions but rather a rule revealing the scale to which "conspiracy" is applied. In this context, the State not only "is not a mere instrument" but is an active participant on the side of certain economic interests while politicians take an active role to deceive, to manipulate, to mesmerise, to disarm any serious protests. It is unfortunate that a forceful exposition of pluralism is trapped in the illusion that "all states are independent social structures"(p56). But their independence is a conditional on being a conveyer belt for other unstated interests.

Decentralisation of power "can have its own complication"(p61) and it does since the terminology of decentralisation is not clearly defined. Is it power equally distributed in the hands of the constituents or is it decentralization of oligarchies and hierarchies to make exploitation more efficient? Unless decentralisation is properly qualified it is but a new name for the old nexus.

Max Nomad's claim that Marx "was a 'crypto-ideologist' for "the neo bourgeoisie" is not surprising. He could foresee "the potential emergence of a neo-bourgeoisie" but did nothing to undermine it since it "would not help the cause of his own aspiring 'out-elite' group" (p74) And to emphasize the function of ideology Baker brings in Edward Gibbon on Christianity:

> The ecclessiastical governors of the Christians were taught to unite the wisdom of the serpent with the innocence of the dove; but as the former was refined, so the latter was insensibly corrupted, by the habit of government." (p74)

The lesson from the abover is clear: power oriented persons or groups need the ideological touch to embellish and cover real cravings and interests. But then to prevent us from relapsing into

political cynisim, Baker warns us that:

> ... it has often been wrongly assumed that the references made by Marx, Pareto and others to the occurrence of deception and illusion in history and society entails merely the claim that cynical, unscrupulous manipulation reigns in politics and elsewhere... (p90)

Power by its own virtue is domination and manipulation. it is not cynicism, it is a fact. It is "not a version of social atomism" but the art of governing. The logistic of governing entails cynicism and manipulation: the honey of the bee and the sting of its poison. Perhaps the justification of manipulation is necessary because the "expectations that the mass of the work force will ever come to act in those positive ways (to be responsible for decision-making) can only be regarded as utopian", (p87) but one has to ensure that utopia it be. Certainly, that expectation will be regarded as utopian if one accepts Baker's over-whelmingly negative views about the "masses", and as he admits that "logical persuasion in social politics has a low success rate even amongst intelligent and well-educated people" (p182) with "non-elite's enjoying a mental fare of moronic television and being compliant to the point of servility" (p54).

Baker's rigorous scientific approach makes him cold to suffering as if suffering is masochism. I can assure him, and he knows it very well, that in the real world of exploitation, poverty and misery there is no pleasure. Work itself is suffering. But in the realm of necessity anyone who tries to assert him/herself, atomistic as it may be, is subject to various tortures not because of masochistic inclinations but because of brutal dominant reality. It is easier to interpret social reality than to fight for freedom, here and now, not as a futuristic aim but as a present necessity. Fighting the Gorgon face of capitalism can lead to horrible consequences but the individual who stands his ground and is crucified, imprisoned and killed is a victim, not a martyr, a courageous person not a masochist. In fairness it may be said that without those rebels who defied authority the determinists would not have been able to determine their determinism, choose their freedom, reject myths and illusions and publish books.

Utopia can be an illusion, idea or ideal. As an ideal it is a vision, a vision to change reality. As such it is teleological and futuristic but its ramifications here and now are important to us. Taking into consideration that many utopians are authoritarian in structures their existential import would virtually be authoritarian. The classless society of Marx was an utopian dream. But the Marxian approach to this utopian dream contained its own contradictions. It was an authoritarian model which allowed a determined "scientific" oligarchy to impose its brand of Marxism upon others and turn the dream into a socialist nightmare because it flooded the real world with abstractions. Thus if "the chances in any society for really widespread, lasting, aware and active democracy appear negligible"(p164), it is because all utopias until now have been authoritarian. If, on the other hand, the utopia has libertarian features and projections, the outcome could be different.

Certainly "no one can make or control the future" (p164)," but equally certainly each of us (and not atomistically) contributes to the future, be it by way of greenhouse gas emissions or by way of libertarian theory and praxis. Classless society is a utopia, democracy is an illusion of democracy, whilst Pluralism is not utopian but futile: emphasizing a balance of power which infact is itself an illusion, if not a myth, especially under the shadow of institutions such as WTO, IMF & WB. And what is known to the observer is only a visible part of socio-political-economic iceberg, the rest is the corridor of conspiracy. And conspiracy there is!

Impartial pursuit of knowledge, critical thinking, logical analyses, while very attractive are not necessarily free from illusions. Where pluralism leads us to:

> ... ethical relationists among the social pluralists ... they usually do not proselytise and use moral concepts or fictions in the misleading, ideological manner as members of most other social groups. (p173)

Pluralists "do not proselytise". They are off the hook. They do not dirty their hands in the marshes of ideologies and illusions But if one steps from the realm of theory into the green valleys of life, things appear in a different light. They too are victims of ideology

despite philosophical reasoning. No action is highly recommended. Action itself is loaded: "..there can be a problem about implementing a viable policy"(p184) especially since "pluralist conditions limit the extent of pluralist awareness." (p. 185) Therefore what is not stated is that liberation without illusion in the Global Village of Capitalist oppression is but resignation, christian acceptance of Evil and the predictability of no exit.

Jack

PUBLIC SECRETS: Collected Skirmishes of Ken Knabb; 1970-1997. Berkeley,CA. Bureau of Public Secrets, 1997. (ISBN 0-939682-03-6)

This eminently readable book has three disinct parts. The first, The Joy of Revolution, is a simple, but not simplistic, outline of why and how a non-hierarchical, non-statist society might be possible. The second part, The Confessions of a Mild Mannered Enemy of the State, is, as the title implies, an autobiographical sketch - "part political chronicle, part self-analyses, part simple nostalgia" (p.156). The last, and largest, part is a collection of Knabb's previous publications, most of them, naturally,from or about a situationist perspective.

John Zerzan gave it a somewhat offhand and unfavourable review in Anarchy:A Journal of Desire Armed (Vol. 15, No 1, 1997. p.10). Zerzan while conceding that it is "temperate, jargon-free" with a "calm, carefully modest, non-argumentative approach" - comments that I fully agree with - nevertheless criticises the book, not for what it is, but for what it is not. That I think is a pretty unfair form of criticism. He says, for example, "Intelligent and articulate, Knabb is, above all, a card-carrying Situationist." So? As far as I know Knabb has never claimed otherwise. Another criticism Zerzan makes is that "I didn't find even one entry that could not have been written in the '70s, mainly in the early '70s at that." Again so what? Surely the point is whether what is written is informed and informative. Further, given that the largest part of the book is a collection of previous publications, which as Zerzan also notes " ... were in fact mostly written during that decade.", it is hardly surprising that it has a '70s

slant!. Ditto with the autobiographical section: how could the autobiography of someone active in the situationist movement in the '70s fail to stress either situationism or the '70s?

Zerzan concludes that:

> As things worsen demonstrably and dramatically, what seems more to the point than a quiet, not ineloquent, recipe from the ideological past, is a deepening of our understanding of how much further we need to go than we thought in the '70s.

But surely to do that one first needs to learn whatever lessons "the '70s" may have to teach. (And who are these "we" and what is this monolithic "thought in the 1970s" ?) I found The Confessions enormously evocative of some aspects of some of the '70s - some of the things it may well be wiser not to repeat, but not to forget, and some of the things it may well be fun to repeat. Knabb concludes this section:

> If some readers consider me an egomaniac for presuming to write about my relatively unspectacular life, I hope that others will be encouraged to reexamine their own experiences. (p. 156)

This reader definitely falls into the latter category.

The next issue of Anarchy (Vol. 15, No 2) contains a letter about Zerzan's review - the gist being that it was an unduly negative review - and Zerzan's reply to the letter. (p.73) Zerzan writes, concerning The Joy of Revolution, :

> My point is that Knabb's outlook does not represent a qualitative break with the world we now inhabit.

Exactly! - and that is exactly why it is worth reading, because it offers suggestions for action in the here and now, not in some future pie in the sky when we are all hunter gatherers again.

Nonetheless, there are areas, especially in The Joy of

Revolution where I question Knabb's - how to put it ? over-optimism maybe? For example, one suggested "solution" for the " violent character" is that he or she "might fit in fine in some more rough- and- tumble, Wild West -type region" (p.71) What happns if this "rough-and-tumble" community decides to expand its territory? Given reservations such as the one just made I'd especially recommend the book for people who are vaguely sympathetic to the idea of a non-hierarchical, non-statist society but who are skeptical of how, in practice, it could ever happen. There are some pointers given and some common bugbears demolished along the way. And it is all written with that rare combination of readability and logicality and elan.

I will let Ken Knabb have the last word - from The Joy of Revolution:

> In the present text I have tried to recapitulate some basic points ... they may at least serve to recall what once was possible, in those primitive times a few decades ago when people had the quaint, old-fashioned notion that they could understand and affect their own history.
> While there is no question that things have changed considerably since the sixties (mostly for the worse), our situation may not be quite as hopeless as it seems to those who swallow whatever the spectacle feeds them. Sometimes it only takes a little jolt to break through the stupor.
> Even if we have no guarantee of ultimate victory, such breakthroughs are already a pleasure. Is there any greater game around? (p.13)

Eugenia Lovelace